

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
 REVIEWED BY *Malcolm Jensen* DATE *7/5/80*
 RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE _____
 TS AUTH. _____ REASON(S) _____
 ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
 DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☒
 RELEASE DENIED ☐
 PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS _____

95
 June 30, 1972

Honorable Charles E. Bennett
 House of Representatives
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Bennett:

The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter dated June 7, regarding the SALT Agreements.

Both the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement on Strategic Offensive Arms contain a withdrawal clause of the kind which has characterized post-war arms control agreements. Either party can withdraw from either Agreement if it decides that extraordinary events relating to the subject matter of the Agreement have jeopardized its supreme interests. Notice of such a decision, including a statement of the extraordinary events involved, must be given six months prior to withdrawal.

Such a withdrawal right is set forth in paragraph 3 of Article XV of the ABM Treaty and paragraph 3 of Article VIII of the Interim Agreement. The Protocol, as the final sentence indicates, is an integral part of the Interim Agreement and is therefore also subject to paragraph 3 of Article VIII thereof.

During the period of the Interim Agreement we expect the United States to maintain its lead in number of warheads. This will be the case even if the USSR develops a MIRV capability which, as you point out, is not prohibited. We, of course, are not prohibited from continuing to deploy our MIRVs as part of our operational force.

Secretary Rogers, in his statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee June 19, emphasized the significant achievement represented by the Agreements. He pointed out that the ABM Treaty formalizes mutual deterrence, and expressed his conviction beyond doubt that the possibility of nuclear war has been dramatically reduced by the Treaty.

The Secretary stated that the Agreements were clearly in the interests of the US and our Allies, and of all the

DEF 18-4 25-455R

AC DA: T. Graham, Jr. - PM/DA: P. A. L. T. W.

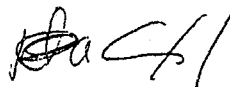
DECLASSIFIED

-2-

world, but that even so the US would have to maintain adequate strategic forces to support mutual deterrence. The Secretary concluded that the Agreements should strengthen international security, and make possible a more stable world.

If I can be of further service in this matter, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely yours,



David M. Abshire
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

MW
Chym

ACDA: TGraham, Jr. - PM/DCA: RAMartin: wl
20690 29092
RS# 7209994

6/21/72



DECLASSIFIED

CHARLES E. BENNETT

MEMBER
3D DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE
ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

AUDREY W. STRINGFELLOW
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
IN CHARGE OF JACKSONVILLE OFFICE
352 FEDERAL BUILDING 32202
TELEPHONE 904-791-2587

VERA BISHOP

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

June 7, 1972

NICK VAN NELSON
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

ROGER HILKERT
LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

WILLIAM H. ANDREWS, ESQ.
DISTRICT AIDE

SHARON H. DAVIS
SHARON L. STILTNER
LISETTE BORNE
SHIRLEY BRYANT
RUTH ADAMS
SECRETARIES

GORDON BLALOCK
STAFF ASSISTANT

The Honorable William P. Rogers
Secretary of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

ACTION
is assigned to

EUK

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Since I am rather senior on the House Armed Services Committee many people have asked me about the Moscow agreements and I have done my best to be informed. However, there are some questions in my mind I would like answered. Specifically, I have before me the May 26 protocol to the interim agreement signed by the President and Mr. Brezhnev and I note the specific limitations for ballistic missile launchers being less substantially for the United States than for Russia. I understand it is thought that since we are ahead of Russia technologically, particularly with the MIRV, there is a equation of sorts at this moment; however, it is my understand there is no prohibition against Russia developing the MIRV and if she does, there would be, in fact, a very substantial edge for Russia in this field while we would be bound greatly to an inferior position in those circumstances.

(2)
69-72

It is my understanding that it is thought the advantages of cooling the situation at this time and particularly lessening the momentum of construction by Russia and perhaps the fact that bombers are not restricted gives sufficient protection. When I asked Secretary Laird about this at our committee hearing, it was my understanding from the Secretary that if the balance became dangerous because we did not in fact keep ahead technologically, then we would have a right to withdraw. However, I have not been able to put my finger on this position relative to this protocol and this limitation, and therefore, I am writing to you for a clarification.

I would deeply appreciate your furnishing me with this information as I am constantly asked questions in this field. I note that the ABM treaty in Article XV does allow withdrawal and I am curious to know why a similar provision was not put in the missile protocol.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

0010122

CEB:sd

Charles E. Bennett

cc: Honorable Melvin Laird

DEF 18-4 US-USSR